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MOTIVATION TO SERVE; A QUANTITATIVE EXAMINATION OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN TURBULENT TIMES.

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Motivation to serve: A quantitative examination of servant leadership in turbulent times.

Abstract

Servant leadership (SL) is generally viewed as a follower-centric theory of leadership. Scholars and proponents of the theory have asserted that prioritizing followers' interests on the part of the servant leader helps foster the desire in followers to become servant leaders themselves. This aspect of SL may be valuable to organisations due to SL being linked empirically to a range of organisational outcomes, including increased productivity and organisational support. Most studies, however, have focused exclusively on the behaviours and desire to serve of leaders and not followers. This paper leans on the work of Ng, Koh and Goh (2008), who designed a motivation to serve (MTS) construct for servant leadership. In this study, Ng et al.'s instrument proved useful for investigating MTL as a motivational antecedent of SL and further facilitated examining the largely neglected population of followers in the SL process. The design employed an extended version of Ng et al.'s MTS scale by including two measures designed to explicitly assess followers' MTS and perceptions of their leaders as role models. The extended version of the MTS scale was validated accordingly using quantitative data from 208 UK employees across private and public sectors. The results contribute to the expansion of one of the most robust multidimensional scales for SL, namely van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) and provide evidence to demonstrate how the relationship of SL to resilience plays a significant role in enhancing followers' desire to serve. This paper, therefore, sheds new light on the impact SL can have in contemporary organisations by virtue of the servant leader's contribution toward creating successful and resilient talent development strategies. Furthermore, we provide grounds for application to today's increasingly dynamic and turbulent business environment based on the current context of Brexit and using antibodies as an extended metaphor.

INTRODUCTION

Medically, an antibody is the blood protein produced to counteract or respond to antigens. Antigens are the external substances that prompt the body's immune system to respond by the production of the antibodies. This paper takes a systemic view of organisations and argues that servant leadership (SL) impacts followers' motivation to serve much like an antibody. By promoting a better working relationship in which managers not only model desirable behaviours for followers, we posit that followers via SL influence may become so driven that their motivation serves as an antibody to fight external antigens that can disrupt the flow in their organisation's system. In this context, antigens and antibodies are used as metaphors for a self-produced mechanism through which organisations produce future leaders to combat external challenges that affect the human workforce within an organisational system. Metaphors are deliberately used in this paper not only to weave the tale of 'disrupting disruptions', but also to express the interplay of concepts from different fields of study. In this way, we aim to promote insightful collaboration and create a holistic framework to support the authors' ontology.

In essence, organisations are systems with structures and parts that can defend against unwanted disruptions and whereby the successes and failures of individual parts affect the whole. Early systems theory (e.g. van Bertalanffy, 1950) was applied within organisational fields through the idea that an organisation is an open system that interacts with its environment (Kataz and Khan, 1966). Selecting from the variety of different perspectives that have evolved since then, this paper considers the system in relation to its environment (Mele, Pels and Polese, 2010). The core principle is best explained by the socio-technical systems of Emery and Trist (1960), in particular the social component with a central focus on agents within the organisation. This approach supports the thinking of Bandura (1977), who conceptualized individual employees as powerful agents within a wider system, thus revealing the importance of understanding the interactions and intricacies that exist between employees and their organisation. This interrelational dynamic results in the active construction of identity where individuals must have a "reasonably accurate sense of their attributes and those of other key individuals with whom they interact" (Ashforth and Schinoff 2016:111). With this notion of systemic identity construction, the SL process becomes central to employee development.

The current study, situated in the context of pre-Brexit UK, was informed by servant leadership theory and applied van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) servant leadership scale (SLS). It is underpinned by a positivist epistemology and grounded in Bandura's (1977) social learning theory. The authors offer a definition of followers' motivation serve and provide a measure via an adapted and extended version of Ng, Koh and Goh's (2008) motivation to serve scale (MTL). Given the volatility of macro-environmental factors—economic, social, legal and political—this paper presents an ideology, that the solution (antibody) to external problems (antigens) lies within organisations, as they also possess inherent capabilities, such as SL behaviours, that can be replicated and maximised to mitigate the effects of threats and weaknesses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

DISRUPTIVE ANTIGENS

It goes without saying that disruption has become the norm; we live in turbulent times with varying disruptions, from issues of Brexit to natural disasters to terrorist attacks across the globe. Indeed, drastic and unprecedented change in today's society is a constant that has invariably come to stay (Teece, 2017). The world is now on a fast track: so much so, that with the explosion of knowledge and technological advancement in the past six decades, one wonders if there will be time to pause and re-evaluate our actions and inactions in light of their consequences. Such examination, if executed, is done sporadically at different levels, especially by organisations whose strategies, whether emergent or rational, are in some form influenced by external e.g. macro-environmental factors.

In the face of these alarming and dynamic disruptions, no amount of wailing will salvage failing or struggling businesses. Therefore, instead of lamentations, counteractive measures should be the pacifier. Counter-disruptive mechanisms liken in essence to antibodies capable of outweighing or balancing the effects of external disruptions. Rationally, an organisation's resilience tactic would require the incorporation of new or different approaches to existing redundant lines of practice. However, the way in which each organisation responds to change and challenges can vary. Competing discourses around emergent or rational strategy suggest that how organisations respond depends on their original strategy (Farnham, 2015).

Without swaying to either side of the debate around incorporating emergent and rational strategies, one can assert that the most important focus for organisations should be on engaging with the tools of strategic management. In combining business leadership with business strategy, strategic management aims to better equip organisations for future challenges and opportunities. According to Jurevicius (2013), the aim of engaging strategy from creation to execution and evaluation is not necessarily to predict the future but to purposively prepare for it, and fundamentally so, for competitive advantage. However, before firms can race to win in their management of future challenges, it behoves them to handle the current ones which are apparent.

A current threat in the UK that has captured the attention of the global community is Brexit. Brexit has a potentially massive disruptive capacity that will impact the operations of HR practitioners. Brexit represents, indeed, a noteworthy, major antigen. Even if the outcomes of Brexit end up to be much ado about nothing, simply by virtue of its inconclusiveness, one can assert that Brexit matters. For instance, as a result of the extension of the deadline for Article 50, the UK will have to finalise its plans for leaving the European Union by October 31, 2019 (CIPD, 2019). This tight deadline has only heightened the levels of uncertainty amid ongoing discussions. The UK cultural context is characterized by 35% uncertainty avoidance, according to Hofstedian analysis (Hofstede, 2019), and thus permits a fluid approach to ambiguity. Whilst citizens may be flexible and able to adjust to emerging environments, Brexit still remains a symbolic antigen which organisations as systems will have to manage in light of

impending outcomes such as reduced mobility/immigration, high turnover of EU employees, and skills shortages amongst others.

POSITIONING THE REPRODUCTION OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS AS A POWERFUL ANTIBODY

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Servant leadership (SL) is a normative approach to leadership introduced through the writings of Robert Greenleaf to propose servitude as the ultimate aim of leading others rather than the of status and power of being served by subordinates. Detached from hierarchical ideology, SL functions such that the followers can in turn seek to serve others as the prime motivation to lead: *“A servant-leader is a person who begins with the natural feeling of wanting to serve first – to help, support, encourage, and lift up others. And because of their noble role model, others begin to lead by serving...”* (Greenleaf 1977).

The terms servant and leadership are considered to be paradoxical due to the distinct perception of a *servant* entailing service to the *leader* who has a higher authority (Boyum 2006). However, Sendjaya, Sarros and Santora (2008) argued that the definition of servant-hood points more towards a voluntary subordination for the good of others rather than that of low self-image. Russell and Stone (2002) added that Greenleaf was deliberate in articulating this model on the supposition that it would motivate organisational members to change their approach to leadership.

According to Spears (2005), SL is the attempt to improve the individual growth of workers and their institutions simultaneously through specific behaviours: listening, empathy, awareness, conceptualisation, persuasion, foresight, healing, stewardship, commitment to the growth of others and building community. Together with other empirically proven behaviours displayed by servant leaders, these features of SL point to two central dimensions of the concept: service and morality (Greenleaf, 1977). However, to date little emphasis has been placed on the motivational dimension of SL, which posits the emergence of followers as leaders having experienced servant leadership themselves. The behaviours of servant leaders can be measured via Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership Scale (SLS). The SLS has eight items or dimensions and they are: empowerment, stewardship, standing back, humility, forgiveness, accountability, courage and authenticity. This study proposes to extend this measure by examining followers' motivation to become a servant leader, i.e. motivation to serve, in relation to leader morality.

Today, interest in SL is proliferating due to its emotional, relational and moral dimensions (Liu, 2017). Contemporary organisations, such as Starbucks, TD Industries, Southwest Airlines, and Vanguard Investment Group, are seriously ascribing to the principles of SL (Lanctot and Irving, 2010). Moreover, due to the malfeasance within organisations, leadership studies are increasingly follower-centric, ethics-driven and directed towards collective and positive outcomes, and SL sits well within the field of leadership in supporting an organisational culture

that empowers followers and creates value for the society (Liu, 2017). In fact, one report stated that almost 20% of companies registered on Fortunes best 100 employers have employed the services or guidance of the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership (Lanctot and Irving, 2010) while one-third of those American companies either endorse or practice SL (Sendjaya and Sarros, 2002; Pekerti and Sendjaya, 2010). Several studies explain how SL brings about commitment of followers (Russell and Stone, 2002) and organisational citizenship behaviour (Graham 1999 and Vondey 2010).

Nonetheless, SL theory is not without criticisms. For example, Anderson (2009) had critiqued SL as a theory only applicable to non-profit organisations. On the contrary, most of the companies mentioned above and others currently imbibing the service orientation are not charitable organisations. In fact, Sendjaya and Cooper (2011) asserted, that in the long-term SL positively impacts the financial bottom line of for-profit organisations. Such evidence suggests that SL is beneficial and its benefits can be maximised when replicated or reproduced to become a permanent feature of the organisational socio-cultural system. The idea is that if SL can enhance followers' commitment, it can be maximised and reproduced by the followers themselves, which in turn can enable retention and encourage the coaching of new employees from induction stage to levels of reproducing SL behaviours. This reproductive effect is the central focus of this paper and is pursued through an investigation into followers' motivation to serve.

MOTIVATION TO SERVE

Motivation to Serve (MTS) was first propounded by Ng, Koh and Goh (2008) who sought to extend Greenleaf's assertion that servant leaders' desire to serve precipitates their leadership. They conceptualized MTS as an individual difference construct premised on the leaders' value orientation, personality traits, and experience of servant leadership. They argued that MTS provides a new insight that circumvents the inadequacies of identifying specific leadership behaviours, which have been diverse and preponderant. However, it does not mean that the behavioural dimension of servant leadership is less relevant, but that other aspects—such as the motivational elements—are equally important, especially in attesting to its antecedents.

Ng and Koh (2010) evaluated other individual difference research and showed how they compare to MTS. For example, based on McClelland's motive disposition, they framed MTS on the assumptions that leaders have more need for power than affiliations since such close relationships may affect their ability to make difficult decisions. Chan and Drasgow's (2001) motivation to lead construct (MTL) also informed Ng and Koh's (2010) analysis. MTL is more prevalent in leadership studies. MTL integrates the process of both leadership performance and leader development based on the assumption, that the characteristics exhibited in leaders in any given circumstance are due to their acquired knowledge, skills, personality traits, and cognitive ability.

To explain the motivational dimension of SL, Ng et al. (2008) proposed a novel MTS measure with six items to examine servant leaders' drive to serve. These antecedents are grounded in

three dimensions: the experience of servant leadership, values, and personality. The personality element was conceptualized through Judge et al.'s (as cited in Ng et al.) five-factor model which has frequently been used in correlational leadership research. As such MTS was grounded in the trait leadership approach, and framed to measure the servant leaders' drive to serve (Ng et al., 2008).

MTS, thus, can be understood as an antecedent of servant leadership, as it was conceptualised on the premise that the leaders' drive is impacted by their value orientation, personality and experience of servant leadership (Ng and Koh, 2010). This assumption suggests that current servant leaders may have experienced servant leadership. Greenleaf (1977) had proposed that followers will grow to become leaders. Therefore, adapting the MTS to ascertain the followers' drive to serve is further supported, since they are presumably experiencing servant leadership, and measuring this drive could empirically affirm or refute the hypothesis that followers of servant leaders desire to serve first and then lead. Theoretically, it is a verifiable assertion that employees can imbibe the attributes of their leaders and reproduce observed behaviours, but no systematic study has shown whether followers desire to become servant leaders themselves. Therefore, the goal of investigating the followers' motivation to serve is to make a useful contribution to the theory and practice of SL from the follower's perspective. The results can contribute to clarifying existing conceptual inconsistencies, and offer new theoretical implications.

FOLLOWERS' MOTIVATION TO SERVE

In the few empirical studies and conceptual pieces exploring MTS the prevalent focus was on the leaders' motivation to serve (Amah, 2015; van Dierendonck, 2011; Amah, 2018). This approach, however, suggests that they are examining the leaders' current drive to serve. It can be argued this MTS may have developed on the job, since the instrument was not designed to examine their motivations before embarking on the actual leadership journey. This raises the question as to the extent to which MTS, investigated in this manner, is a proven antecedent of SL. Nonetheless, other studies corroborate previous findings, although a similar methodology was adopted (Amah, 2015, 2018). Yet, it is theoretically plausible that servant leaders do not lose their drive to serve on the job since they still possess a service orientation, and the enhancement of such motivations is not a denial of its initial existence. Ng et al. (2010) claimed that MTS as a motivational state 'is more proximal to behaviour and amenable to development'.

Indeed, Greenleaf's (1977) proposition that servant leadership starts with the need to serve before one becomes a leader has become very popular. Additional insight can be gained from van Dierendonck's (2011) assertion, that even those who are first motivated to lead may yet well qualify to be good servant leaders should they develop the serving attitudes. As such, it may not as much require the initial drive to serve that makes one a servant leader, but rather that one can learn to serve and be driven to be a servant leader whilst leading others in any capacity. Both notions are acceptable, even though they may both fall into the nature vs. nurture debate. Essentially, the most important factor is whether the leaders are actually serving others.

This moral principle to serve (Greenleaf, 1977), as initiated by the leaders' motivation, is as important as examining their outward behaviours. After all, an individual's sense of their moral self-influences their moral judgement and resulting behaviour (Reynolds and Ceranic, 2007). These assumptions form the foundation for the need for empirical exploration into the motivational element of servant leadership.

The focus on ascertaining the leader's MTS, though valid, does not incorporate the followers' perspective which is equally important in a dyad of this nature. More so, SL is a follower-centric leadership approach (Sendjaya et al., 2008; Russell and Stone, 2002) and considered to be at its peak when the followers themselves become servant leaders. In fact, Greenleaf stated:

'The Servant-Leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead... The best test, and difficult to administer is this: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit, or at least not further be harmed?' (Greenleaf, 1977: 7).

Hence, examining the motivational attributes of the follower prior to their becoming servant leaders is crucial. More so, MTL which functions on the assumption that an individual's motivation to lead is not determined at birth and can change over time with social learning experiences (Chan and Drasgow, 2001) allude to the fact that a leader's motivation may change over time. Albeit, focusing on the leaders' motivation alone may not give a rounded perspective of what the motivational tendencies are at a followership level. Moreover, this approach responds to Lacroix and Verdorfer's (2017) call for further investigation into the followers' motivation to serve as an outcome of their perception of servant leadership.

In this study, followers are the unit of analysis and MTS is treated as the followers' inclination to promote the interest of others, especially their colleagues, such that their drive to serve will propel them to become servant leaders themselves. It is still grounded in the same theories or assumptions underpinning leaders' MTS. However, an additional two items were added to further the understanding of followers' desire to become servant leaders and how much they view their leaders as their leadership role model.

Furthermore, even if scholars acknowledge the essence of leaders' drive to serve, no multidimensional scale has incorporated this concept to date (van Dierendonck, 2011; Eva, et al. 2018) or remotely considered the followers' motivation to serve and become servant leaders themselves. Therefore, this study contributes to the field of SL by incorporating the motivational dimension to a multidimensional SL scale. After all, the uniqueness of the SL construct can be better appreciated when both behavioural and motivational dimensions are examined (van Dierendonck, 2011). Bearing in mind that these SL measurement scales are designed to measure SL behaviours which the followers are meant to complete, it raises no conflict for followers to also rate their motivation to serve as an underpinning element of SL. The rating of themselves as potential servant leaders is key because the apex of SL relationship

is to develop others into servant leaders. Thus, one should wonder if SL is fully apprehended without examining the extent to which it fulfils this expected motivational function.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study focuses on learned behaviours in followers which are exemplified by leaders, based on the notions of role modelling and vicarious learning in Bandura's (1977) social learning theory. Modelling is the form of representing or performing a required behaviour for others to observe and learn (Bandura, 1977). This drives the assumption that followers can learn to serve by observing their leaders and it is this theoretical basis upon which the author supports Greenleaf's (1977) concept of followers becoming servant leaders via a motivation to serve.

In essence, by virtue of observation followers can learn and reproduce the behaviours and attributes of their servant leaders. There are four observational learning processes. The first is the attentional process whereby the follower learns by paying attention and accurately perceiving the modelled behaviour. This is informed by the characteristics of the observer based on their desires, experience and cognition and the functional value and feature of the activity/behaviour or model (Bandura, 1977). The others are retention processes where the observers/learners retain the acquired knowledge, motor reproduction processes which involves their responses to modelled patterns and motivational processes which is concerned with the motivational incentives models/leaders offer to enable their followers to reproduce the learnt behaviours (O'Rourke, 2003; Blanchard and Thacker, 2013).

The study is not seeking to explore how followers learn or if they learn at all. Instead, it proposes the SLT as a theoretical lens to support the claim that followers who have experienced servant leadership with its positive attributes would have by observation, whether consciously or unconsciously, be motivated to serve others. More so, SLT proposes that the followers' cognitive capacity determines how they are affected by their experiences and where their actions will lead (Bandura, 1991). Hence this study proposes the possibility of their experiences leading them to have a high motivation to serve. Further studies can examine how the followers evolve to be servant leaders or if they eventually become leaders and why.

A past study which examined the possibility of followers becoming servant leaders concluded that followers will avoid leadership positions for fear of the high expectations attached to servant leadership in particular (Lacroix and Verdorfer, 2017). They had based their claims on the assumption that the relationship between the followers and servant leader, who can portray an attractive image of leadership and impact followers positively, is affected by the followers' conception of an ideal leader. Nevertheless, one can argue that not all followers will become servant leaders or at best servant leadership is more accessible by those followers who have the natural or learned inclination to serve others. More so, their measurement was based on MTL alone, and, as discussed earlier, MTL is not sufficient to prove MTS.

METHOD

Respondents were purposively recruited from different organisations with both private and public sector representation. The highest represented sector was the education sector (n=63; 30.3%), followed by insurance (n=44; 21.2%) and healthcare (n=23; 11.1%) as shown in the appendix. The majority of the respondents worked in multinational corporations (n=134; 64.4%), while an almost even number of them worked in medium (n=41; 19.7%) and small sized corporations (n=33; 15.9%). Most of these organisations were for-profit organisations (n=109; 52.4%), and public organisations (n=81; 38.9%) with a few non-profit and private organisations (n=18; 8.7%) such as charities.

Approximately 60% of the participants worked full-time (n=125), 37% worked part-time (n=76) and a few others were either rating their previous employers or worked zero-hour contract (n=7; 3%). A greater number of 111 females (53.4%) participated compared to 93 males (44.7%) while four respondents (1.9%) left their gender undisclosed. Majority were in non-managerial roles (n=155; 74.5%), no one was a top manager, a few others were first line managers (n=40; 19.2%) while the smallest percentage described themselves as being in middle level management positions (n=13; 6.5%). The average age of the 200 participants, who stated their age is 32.4, ranging from 17 years to 80 years with 21 years as the mode. On average, the participants were overseeing two persons, while those in managerial a position oversaw at least four subordinates on average.

The respondents had a total of 102 male leaders (48.6%), with almost similar number of female leaders (n=102; 49%), but 2.4% preferred not to state their leader's gender. A high percentage (65.38%) of the managers/leaders are older than the respondents, a smaller number (n=33; 15.87%) are about the same age as the participants while a few leaders are younger than the respondents (n=39, 18.75%). Most of the leaders as expected were first line managers/team leaders (n=126, 60.58%), some, especially rated by participants who were leaders themselves, were middle level managers (n=54, 25.96%), while some rated top managers (n=28; 13.46%), so there were no non-managers.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the data. The motivation to serve (MTS) scale was extended with the inclusion of two items and analysed with descriptive and inferential statistics. The current eight-item scale is reliable with a Cronbach alpha above the recommended .70. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to not only evaluate the construct validity of the extended scale but also to reduce the number of factors or dimensions of both scales after incorporating the MTS scale to the servant leadership scale (Kim, 2009). By extending the servant leadership construct to include a follower dimension, the researcher hopes to emphasise the essence of the motivational aspect of leadership and promote the examination of servant's leaders' behaviours in respect to their influence in reproducing servant leaders.

To conduct the EFA, a Principle Component Analysis (PCA) was chosen over Factor Analysis because even if both could produce similar results, the study approach sought to empirically summarise the data set (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013) such that all the original items have become a set of linear combinations composed of all the variance in the variables. The factorability of the two scales were examined based on standard criteria with emphasis on the sample size, factor extraction technique and factor rotation and interpretation (Pallant, 2016). For example, the sample is above the recommended sample size of 150 or five cases to one, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is .828 which is above the recommended .6 (Neill, 2008) and Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant ($p < .00$). Varimax rotation was done on the orthogonal data producing a transformation matrix with most scores over .7. The results from the communalities table showed that all items extracted were over .3 hence zero items were excluded.

To determine the factors to extract, an exploratory approach was adopted which allowed for some experimentation. First the Kaiser criterion was considered based on the eigenvalue rule where factors over 1.0 were extracted. These were the first nine components above 1.0 (12.873, 3.174, 2.292, 1.765, 1.553, 1.168, 1.120, 1.026 and 1.004). However, these were further evaluated against the percentile eigenvalue from a parallel analysis (PA) since the Kaiser technique has been critiqued for producing many components (Pallant, 2016). Hence a PA was conducted using Patil et al.'s (2017) online tool where a comparative overview of the PA percentile eigenvalue (2.057, 1.873, 1.787, 1.708, 1.628) and the original PCA eigenvalue showed that only the first four factors can be extracted. This is because the generated eigenvalue for the primary study should be higher than corresponding random eigenvalue (Horn, 1965). The four factors are acceptable because even the component matrix also shows that the items load strongly above .4 on the first four components. Based on the Kaiser technique, the first four factors account for 48.28% of the 58.3% cumulated variance but after extraction accounted for 52.91% cumulative variance. Hence, only four factors/components were extracted.

A reliability check of the components using Cronbach alpha revealed that the factors are considerably or moderately reliable especially one factor below .70. However the entire scale is reliable with a Cronbach alpha of .937. The factors retained their names except for factor one which is renamed responsibility given the similarity and diversity of the 25 items that collapsed into one. Their Cronbach alphas ordered accordingly from factor 1-4 are: responsibility (.955), motivation to serve (.77) accountability (.768) and forgiveness (.67).

Table 1 Descriptive analysis and correlation between variables.

	Correlations	No. of items	M (SD)	Cronbach's α
Servant Leadership		30	133.13 (22.88)	.93
Motivation to serve	.405**	6	30.80 (4.83)	.76

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

This moderate correlation between servant leadership (SL) and the followers' motivation to serve is indeed telling. It goes to prove that followers' experience of SL can actually propel them to cultivate an attitude toward serving others. Contrary to the seemingly presumed weakness that serving or caring for others may connote, Greenleaf (1977) contended that the idea of service is to empower institutions to go beyond emphasizing profits or production to growing people without necessarily losing their grip on managing the affairs of productivity and performance in order to survive and meet the expectations of society. He insisted that the leader can support individuals with a clear purpose to enable them to preserve their individuality while contributing to the entire purpose of the enterprise. The reasoning for this is that when the employees' development and needs are prioritized, they generate motivation for themselves and are equipped to exert their efforts toward organizational goals.

Table 2 Comparison of the correlation of variables between leaders' gender.

<i>Correlations</i>		
Leaders' gender	1	2
Male		
Servant Leadership	-	
Motivation to serve	.571**	-
Female		
Servant Leadership	-	
Motivation to serve	.298**	-

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The assumptions for conducting and comparing the correlations coefficient for two/three groups has been considered before carrying out this analysis. For example there are over 20 cases for each group and these participants are different (Pallant, 2016). The statistical significance of the difference between the correlation coefficients of male and female leaders were tested with a resulting z value of 2.41 and p (two tailed) of 0.016 which is less than .05, meaning the result is statistically significant. Hence, there is a positive statistically significant difference in the strength of the correlation between SL and MTS for male and female leaders. Servant leadership explains significantly more of the variance in followers' motivation to serve in male than females.

Gendering in leadership is not new or strange. In fact, Role Congruity Theory (RCT) explains the gendering of leadership as the developed perception of gender due to an evolving sex-based division of labour that can be moderated by time (Eagly and Karau, 2002). Actually, servant leadership has been criticised as been gender biased and an approach for sustaining male dominance (Eicher-Catt, 2005) while others view SL as a philosophy that promotes feminine attributes of care (Anderson, 2009 and Avolio, Walumba and Weber, 2009).

In fact, Washington, Sutton, and Field (2006) stated that SL is related to gender; arguing that females had more features of servant leadership than males but due to their limited scope proposed a further inquiry of the assertion. A more recent study by Barbuto and Wheeler (2010) suggested that the altruistic nature of servant leadership allows servant leaders to serve followers without gender bias.

The results shows that the followers have a perception that may suggest a favouring of male leaders in terms of how driven they are to serve others than those who have female leaders. This does not mean that the female leaders are themselves not excellent servant leaders, especially since there is not significant difference between both genders, rather it suggests what Jones and George (2008) argue to be the contextual and normative factors or perception of leadership which hinder most women from attaining their full potential within leadership cadres particularly due to numeric imbalance. To reduce this gender gap, Reynolds (2011) proposed that awareness creation aimed at promoting an integrative approach to organisational life could evoke an increasing adoption of feminine behaviours in leaders.

Table 3 Comparison of the correlation of variables between followers' gender and between their full/part time workers.

Correlations

Follower gender and work time basis		1	2
Male	Servant leadership	-	
	Motivation to serve	.488**	-
Fulltime			.406**
Female	Servant leadership	-	
	Motivation to serve	.340**	
Part time			.446**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is a medium correlation between the experience of servant leadership and the followers' motivation to serve for both genders and on both work time basis but no significant difference with a z score of 1.28 and p value (one tailed) of 0.1038 and z score of -0.33 and p value (one tailed) of 0.3707 respectively. These results are not necessarily surprising given the fact that the drive to serve is a learned behaviour which should logically not even be differentiated by gender or time.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to explore the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. It was informed by the level of correlations as shown above. Hence, MTS as a dependent variable was regressed against the independent variable which are the eight dimensions of servant leadership, after fulfilling the assumptions of conducting this standard regression. For example, the results show a variance inflation factor (VIF) of less than 10 and a tolerance value greater than .10 indicating no multicollinearity (Pallant, 2016). Also, the regression analysis was conducted severally till all cases shown by the case-wise diagnostics were eliminated.

Table 4 Multiple Regression Model summary

<i>Model Summary^b</i>									
					Change Statistics				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Chang e
1	.484 ^a	.235	.231	4.219	.235	60.718	1	19	.000
								8	

a. Predictors: (Constant), Servant Leadership

b. Dependent Variable: Motivation to serve

The model summary R. Square= 23.5 (.000, <0.0005) suggests that servant leadership has a 23.5 per cent of the variance in followers' motivation to serve. As originally proposed by Ng Goh and Koh, the followers MTS is not only grounded in their experience of servant leadership but in their values and personalities which have not been measured in this study. Nonetheless, this is a considerable result given the regular results within social sciences and it is not distant from the adjusted R square which is the corrected value with a better estimate of the true value of the population.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Employees who are highly motivated to serve others can become induction champions. Induction is an opportunity for a business to welcome their new recruit, help them settle in and ensure they have the knowledge and support they need to perform their role. For an employer,

effective induction may also impact turnover and absenteeism (CIPD, 2018). The engaged members who are better motivated to serve can serve as resourceful buddies who can empower new employees to settle in via the induction process. The induction process is the opportunity that can enable organisations to not only welcome new employees but also a time to have a good perception of the employer brand. The activities for on boarding of this nature is not a 'tick box' exercise and requires a good amount of commitment to empower the new recruits with useful information and support so that they do not leave the organisation within their first six months due to a bad impression (CIPD, 2018).

Based on Hofstede's (2019) website report, the UK power distance rating (35%) is minimal showing a fair play for equal treatment in the midst of class differences. Yet in practice, generally speaking, employees seem to be better able to speak to fellow colleagues about certain matters than to their supervisors or persons who are either higher or lower in rank. Although the once class-conscious society, even to the point of obsession, has now evolved to the point of classlessness (Farnham, 2015); the presence of organisational hierarchy, at least on paper, is not eroded. Moreover, the UK population is not made up of only the British people, there are now about eight ethnic classifications of the population; including Pakistan, Africans, and Chinese. Most of these different nationalities have a higher power distance culture. Even if the individuals can adjust to the British system and employment laws, in reality, the ideal of hierarchy may be redundant but embedded in their minds and capable of resurfacing in their attitudes and behaviours.

Bandura's vicarious learning theory (1977) better highlights this possibility, as it posits individuals were not born with innate repertoires of behaviour but have to learn behaviours from experience in their environment. This premise does not oversimplify the role of biological features affecting physical development, but goes to show that they can be reoriented. Perhaps a reorientation should do the trick and that is why servant leadership is often more relevant. In essence, servant leadership suggests a reversal of hierarchy whereby a leader serves others and leads them to be better persons, such that the served would desire to lead by serving others (Winston and Field, 2015). This concept of servanthood is not in itself portraying a low-self-image of a leader but a voluntary subordination for common good (Sendjaya et al., 2008). Moreover, these behaviours can be learnt by leaders and followers alike.

This reversal of hierarchy provides a further reflection on the idea of classlessness, and raises questions as to its actual feasibility. Bearing in mind that the notion of class is not restricted to economic capacity alone but in the natural differences from person to person. Indeed, some characteristics are protected and cannot be openly discriminated against. Similarly, it is hardly conceivable in the midst of increasing differentiating markers such as the quest for unique identities amidst inclusivity and the natural order of differences and uncontrollable circumstances/disasters. Indeed, Kew and Stredwick (2016) asserted that most of the organisations that adopted the 1970s employment opportunity legislation did so for fear of sanctions than for the long-term outcome. Regardless of the motive, this move resulted in the elimination of the worse cases of gender, sexist and racial discriminatory behaviours.

Today, the obvious classification system originally embedded in the minds of the British people is fading away with the change in societal values. The idea of hierarchy which classifies people into their levels of experience, status, and reward structure amongst other variables is still evident in organisations today and reasonably so. How this impacts perception and level of relationship may not be the immediate concern of this paper, but the idea of servant leadership was actually proposed in the face of traditional domineering and class differentiating forms of leadership (Greenleaf, 1977). Servant leadership structures in the midst of hierarchical systems, thus, remove the parochial mind-set of hierarchy and inculcate the reversal mind-set where employees and their interest are accounted for, and enhance employees' confidence to approach their managers/leaders.

IMPLICATIONS OF MTS AS AN ANTIBODY

Farnham (2015) (as cited in Lepak and Snell, 2007) asserted that organisations are driven by employers' demand for competitive advantage, hence the shift from the management of jobs to the management of people. From a systemic vantage point, human intelligence and capabilities, e.g. human resources, are required to make other resources relevant. Managing employees so that they remain with an employer as productive and committed members in achieving organisational goals (Taylor, 2014) aids in organisations to stay relevant. Executing strategies to enhance productivity through procedures that maximise human capital to meet current and future organisational needs (Das and Baruah, 2013) contributes to organisational sustainability. Especially in the global fight for skills/talent, retention is an HR outcome which is gaining critical significance to organisations due to the increasingly tight labour market with an inherent skills gap (ONS, 2015).

One possible outcome of Brexit for the UK is an increase in turnover of employees who are EU citizens depending on the ensuing post-Brexit environment. With the possibility of EU citizens who make up the current labour force departing, there are some underlining questions and implications for an ageing population, as is the case in the UK. Although ONS (2019) reported a 3.9% unemployment rate, which is lower than last year by 0.1%, the employment rate has also increased to an estimated 76.1% and is particularly high for women, which is attributable to the state pension age for women. Nonetheless, the declining birth rate has brought about an ageing population of about 9 million, and projected increases to 27% in 2025 and 38% in 2050 (Farnham, 2015). This has impacted the nature and size of the working population for those within age 16-60 (Kew and Stredwick, 2016).

Deloitte (2016) reported that two-third of 7700 millennials interviewed desire to leave their current organizations before the end of 2020 and of the 300 millennials who responded from the UK, 71% also have a high turnover intention. The discrepancies between UK workers' aspirations to leave and the desire for employees to remain—to potentially take on leadership roles—adds another layer of pressure to the role of HRM in the face of Brexit. The reality is that baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) are fast retiring and the millennials are the generation poised to take over vacant roles, some of which have an increasing demand for

tacit knowledge and new skills. Whilst the level of preparedness of millennials to occupy these positions is a worthy examination, for now it is apparent that adequate transfer of knowledge is critical in the development of employees targeted for retention (Bramley et al., 2012). As such, the relationship between leadership and followership and the possible impact leaders have in transferring their knowledge and behaviours to their followers, which this study highlights, have implications for retention and employee development strategies.

The results of this study suggest that leaders can inspire their followers to perform better by modelling the right attitude and skills, and thereby promote retention captured in the motivation to serve. Among the voluntary and involuntary reasons why people leave their organisation, workers who are unable to perform effectively and deliver good results often desire to leave their organisation (Elnaga and Imran, 2013). Retention is so important that 38% of 270 organisations' talent management strategy is to retain their employees (CIPD, 2015). Hence, promoting the MTS within organisations can serve as the antibody to fight antigens like turnover, or possibly the exodus of EU citizens from post-Brexit UK, and promote collaboration and the transfer of knowledge thought a mindset of service and a culture promoting the wellbeing and welfare of others.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the volatile global economic environment calls for strategic counteraction to disruption. Fostering a motivation to service in the workforce can act as a preventative and corrective leadership intervention, much like an antibody. The example of the UK population in a Brexit context demonstrates the urgency of developing new systemically robust strategies. Organisations that are yet to explore the systemic benefits of servant leadership can begin by embracing its tenets and train their leaders to serve. Prioritising employees' needs is critical, especially in turbulent times, but it is a re-orientating process that is not spontaneous. Acting on the ethic of putting people first may be challenging in large organisations, but it is still achievable. As organisations come to accept this new ethic, they will be better equipped to achieve their goals through their staff, who are better enabled. Indeed, it takes a gradual process to make an ethical shift towards growing people. Hence, it will take an exerted effort to draw those employees who have great potential and desire to grow.

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APPENDIX

YOURSELF

This page focuses on **you as an employee** while the following sections concerns the **single leader** of your choice. **Please rate the extent to which you agree with these statements.**

It starts with strongly disagree to strongly agree

ADAPTED MOTIVATION TO SERVE SCALE.

[illegible]

SERVANT LEADERSHIP SCALE

Still **bearing the same leader** in mind, please rate the extent to which these statements are true. From the lowest (strongly **disagree**) to the highest rate (strongly **agree**)

[illegible]

